

Wednesday May 31st, 1961
Combined group at the Index apartment

Tapes; the value of them for use during the summer. Requirements for summer use: 1. minimum of six people 2. one person to make a catalogue of contents.

QUESTION: Don Varella

Asked about chief feature and what his chief feature is.

ANSWER: Chief feature is personal. You wouldn't believe it even if you were told your chief feature and therefore it is not right to speak about it in front of others. Chief feature can be discussed generally.

Chief feature is the greatest common denominator of all my different attitudes. It is a motivating power which predominates in a variety of conditions and circumstances and in many of actions and attitudes.

How to look through white glasses, or to look truthfully or transparently. White is the combination of all colors in the octave or the Do in which all notes have united. All the constituent colors then lose their individual characteristics. White is in opposition to black. Blackness is no color, the absence of color. Consciousness is a state of whiteness and unconsciousness is a state of blackness. Unconsciousness has no existence. It can only be known through comparison. Sleep is the absence of awakeness.

Behind personality is a motivating power which makes me behave as I do. It is sometimes called my nature but it would be closer to call it my body in conformity with the Laws of Earth. To find my chief feature, I must find what is natural to me.

Man consists of three thirds. The first is biological or heredity. It is conditioned by that which I receive from my father and mother and their parents and my racial background. The second third is Natural or Astrological. At the moment of conception or birth certain astrological conditions influence us. The last third is Sociological. The breathing of air after birth is a food which influences our growth. This third influence leads to growth of personality and involves, as well as air, other external influences. The first two-thirds determine type.

To find chief feature, I must go through personality, through the sociological third. Unnatural or strange conditions or circumstances can bring me closer to my real nature. This would include among other things, religious experience, strong people who are developed within themselves, beautiful things, music and even alcohol. By becoming closer to my real nature I will become more free from the sociological influences. I will become more like an animal. An animal has the first two-thirds more developed than we do. It is less covered up/.

Culture and civilization cover up the first two-thirds. Animals are true to their types. I must find what is my personality first. When a child reacts to its surroundings and starts to refer to itself as 'I', then it will stay in sociological development. In order to find type, I must go back to my natural tendencies. It is difficult to determine what my astrological influences are because the necessary knowledge and data is now lost. It is difficult to distinguish between my astrological and natural influences and I must try not to mix them up. If I rid myself of my sociological third, I will become more essential. Acquired characteristics are partly sociological and partly natural. These characteristics belong to my type but are also influenced by my surroundings, the climate in which I live, certain racial qualities and especially by the people with whom I associate. An example of the pianist who played only Beethoven and then began to actually resemble Beethoven. Another example of poets being influenced by the works of Tagore and who then started to write like him. The mannerisms, the behavior and even the way of thinking of those who I associate with have a great influence on me. Children resemble their parents not necessarily through heredity but because both are subject to and influenced by the same surroundings. Parents-child resemblances are a combination of both heredity and external influences.

There are a tremendous number of influences of which I am the product. But I must now try to find the truth of my motivations. For my to find my chief feature, I must ~~have~~ give a great deal of thought and have a willingness to accept and admit that what I find is really so. The second requisite for finding chief feature is that I have a knowledge of the influence from the three groups.

How do I see myself or find out what I am?

1. Test myself regarding a variety of different people. It is good to have a great deal of contact with other people, particularly with those who I usually avoid. I must expose myself to them and study my reactions.
2. How am I with animals and plants? Do I have feelings towards animals? What are my motivations since animals can not repay the way in which people can? Sit quietly and philosophize about your relation to animals.
3. Meditation. See how my thinking center functions. Try to see what kind of thoughts I allow in my mind. This is analogous to trying to see the wants and indulgences of my body. My mind requires by association, a certain amount of food which it wants. Examples: What do you read in the newspapers? How much time do you spend with the Sunday paper? What is my mind occupied with? What books does it read and what movies or plays it is interested in? Can it be quiet or must it always talk?

Try to unscramble the variety of attitudes and find the common denominator.

my separate I's are not without relationship. They know about each other and remember what each promised and committed myself to. If I borrow one hundred dollars, it will take a long time to find one little I who doesn't know about it.

I must distill that which is more essentially true. Apply the universal solvent to find the truth of inner motivations. Then I will have done away with sociological influences. I will be more natural and closer to my type.

Chief feature will not immediately give the clue to my total behavior because acquired characteristics comprise a huge part of my behavior. Many people believe that these characteristics are the major motivating force.

I must recognize the limitations of my centers and the limitation of my capacity to Be. Chief feature is connected with a form of fear. It is related to an anxiety about behaving naturally. When you find A chief feature, try to also find how it will be helpful in your work. It should not be called chief fault. A fault is that which I am responsible for but I am not responsible for my chief feature. Discovery of a chief feature can remind me to be awake, to say, "That is what I am." The energy put into trying to see what is my chief feature is equal to the energy that I have for trying to be present to myself. Behavior in the face of danger or in the face of criticism ~~is~~ belongs very closely to the realm of chief feature. If I didn't have chief feature, I would be in a condition that I wouldn't trust or would be fearful of.

QUESTION: Don Varella

The question was not audible on the tape but I understood it to be: If I recognize something in someone else, doesn't this necessarily mean that it also exists in me?

ANSWER: No. It is possible to see something in someone else which does not exist in me. This can be a question of objectivity. However, If I do not experience objectivity, I will never recognize it. I can detect a lie in someone else even if I do not lie (about the same thing). We all lie because of our conditions but because the conditions are different the lies will be different. The more I can pierce through another's personality, the more I will perceive the motivations of that person.

There are four ways to reach the truth.

1. The ordinary way of science. In order to reach truth through science I must first become objective. Science may reach the Absolute. The conclusions of science can come close to that central point called truth. Truth can not be defined on Earth because it is only relative on that level. Science can come closer to truth because there is less personality and interpretation involved.
2. Art. Art is an attempt to reproduce a representation of inner life. Art may be subjective but if I free it from my own subjectivity it will be objective. Everyone is impressed by objective art in exactly the same way. In the presence of objective art, everyone must become more essential.
3. Philosophy. The distillation from various philosophers can be a mode of feeling. It belongs more to feeling than to mind but the mind must be clear. But I have no yardstick and I will vacillate from one

For a while we must leave the idea of creating conditions for other people. We do not know them well enough yet.

Loving: Try to understand what is necessary for the growth of the other person and create those conditions which will help that person to grow, preferably without their knowing of this. The difference between pressure and a vacuum: One pushes or coerces the other person into a certain form of behavior the other permits the loved one to grow into and fill the vacuum.

QUESTION: Barney Rippes

Largely inaudible in detail. The question had to do with a task to write something and the knowledge that there was retrospective unhappiness over the results, i.e., that which was written.

ANSWER: Try to see that the memory of something does not exist in the present except if I allow myself to be affected by that which is in the past. Memory is only valid in the sense that it once existed. Become positive about the present rather than negative about the past.

We must try to bring questions. Write them down when they are clear. Don't wait too long or you will not remember them in the same way. Bring statements of experiences rather than questions. Whatever you talk about in groups, THAT ~~is~~ is really you. Learn how to work, then put it into words and get it out of your system otherwise you will repeat rather than grow.

You know many moments of waste--- waste in the sense that you could have accomplished something in terms of work. We should have a tendency, even if that tendency is not actualized, that we ought to be more what we ought to be. We must get a new attitude and eliminate flippancy. You must allow yourself to be influenced first when you are alone and then with friends. Don't be ashamed of being interested in that which does not have immediate material value.

We are under the influence of the world situation which can make us lose interest in work. We must try to safeguard against this. Prayer alone is sometimes not enough. The mind must also be clear--- then maybe the body will conform.

Prepare for summer when there will be no meetings so that everything will not be lost. These ideas are not subject to time or ordinary laws even if you don't adhere to them, believe in them or understand them.

You must be honest and try to work.

from one philosopher to another and mix them all together and make this my life philosophy. This is not digestible food.

4. Religion - emotional. Gives me security and peace. The danger of religion is taking dogma and substituting it for what is really the meaning behind it. Another danger is personal interpretation. Through this way, it is possible to get close to a sense of worship. Through higher force it is possible to produce a real sense of religiousness with willingness.

The last three ways are the same as ordinary science except that each starts at a different place. I can circle truth with all four ways and come closer and closer until I finally realize that truth is not of this world. Then I can add the third dimension which is objectivity and end up with Understanding. On that basis I can recognize people through their motivations and really become their friend, husband or wife, business partner or whatever is required.

QUESTION: Fred Perleman

The question was largely inaudible on the tape. What I could glean was that it had to do with the tendency to think about making efforts rather than actually making efforts.

ANSWER: Preparation rather than contemplation is necessary for work. Do not ~~then~~ permit thoughts but rather give the body certain behavior to be used as a means for having attention. There is a twelve hour difference between ultimate black and ultimate light with many gradations of light inbetween. So it will be with work. Moments of darkness must be since I am on Earth and this is the condition of Earth. If I stay in the sun all the time I will burn up.

I have not the right to criticize even if I am not awake. This is obnoxious. I must use the energy of criticism for my aim.

QUESTION: Completely inaudible.

ANSWER: Dissolving! I have to know what kind of solvent to use. Solvents are external conditions and are made by the people with whom I associate. I do not yet know what they will extract from me. I must have willingness to find out which are helpful.

How to dissolve:

1. To associate with those people who rub me the wrong way and try to see my behavior.
2. I must have sufficient interest to put myself under these conditions and not to react in the usual way. My wish will have to come from a realization that I am what I am --- a nincompoop. I need something to become something else. I must believe that this is good for me, that it is healthy.